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Dec. 7.—In 2 miles, through a pelting hurricane of rain, reached the depôt, and I had the pleasure of shaking hands with Captain Norman.

FREDERICK WALKER,
Leader of the Expedition.*

5.—*Despatch from* Governor SIR H. BARKLY *to the Duke of Newcastle, dated 21st August, 1862.*

MY LORD DUKE,—

* * * * *

I stated when I wrote on 23rd April last, that Mr. Walker had started on 20th December from the Depôt on the Albert River, with the view of following up the tracks of Burke and his companions, which he had found on the Flinders River on his outward journey; and that Mr. Landsborough, who subsequently returned to the *Albert* from a fruitless journey to the south-west, intended to leave it about the middle of February on a similar errand, in case the first party should miss the trail.

This extra precaution was not unnecessary, for, after tracing Burke to his second or third return camp with difficulty, owing to the rains which had fallen, Mr. Walker was obliged to abandon the attempt in consequence of not finding any signs of his farther progress southwards; and, striking off towards the north-east, managed, not without many hardships and dangers from the exhaustion of his stores and loss of his horses, to reach Port Denison safely by the end of April. Mr. Landsborough, likewise, as will be seen from the narrative, failed to discover the route pursued by Burke, though he travelled up the banks of the Flinders for about 400 miles—the heavy floods which prevailed having even obliterated the recent traces of Walker and the large number of horses which he took with him. Notwithstanding this failure, however, Landsborough continued his course in a southerly direction, merely crossing the hills for about 20 miles, till he reached the source of the Thomson, a river known to flow towards the south-west, and found by him to be one of the main tributaries of the Cooper. When within about 150 miles, however, from the depôt formed by Mr. Burke prior to starting for Carpentaria, fearing for the sufficiency of his provisions, which from the first

* This paper completes the narrative of the various expeditions despatched in search of Messrs. Burke and Wills; Mr. Howitt's expedition, which rescued King, as published in Vol. XXXII. of the Society's Journal, p. 430, having for the most part traversed ground so well known as to render it unnecessary to reproduce it *in extenso*.—ED.

had been short, he turned off, and, striking the river Warrego, followed it down until he struck the Darling itself, above Fort Bourke.

By this journey, Mr. Landsborough has not only made a most important addition to our geographical knowledge, but has practically accelerated in a remarkable degree the formation of a Northern settlement.

With regard to the first, he has taught us that Sturt's Desert extends but a short distance eastwards, and that between it and the foot of the eastern chains of mountains, spreads a fine pastoral country, watered by rivers which find an outlet in lakes to the south-west; whilst, more unexpected still, the water-parting between those streams trending southward and those which flow north to the Gulf of Carpentaria, proves to be scarcely more than 20 miles in width, and may be crossed at an elevation of about a thousand feet.

As to the second point, already, stock are being driven from New South Wales to these fresh pastures, and the best-informed newspapers here predict that, before another year shall have elapsed, the whole continent east of the 140th degree will be mapped out and occupied for grazing purposes.

It may appear strange that, with large tracts within the limits of existing settlements yet but nominally stocked, the *exodus* of Tropical Australia should be so rapid; but the rainfall of the new country is believed to be heavier and more regular than on the Darling; and at the same time the Australian air is so comparatively dry, even in the Tropics, and the all-pervading forests of gum-trees so open and free from jungle, that the climate is far healthier and more endurable by European constitutions than in similar low latitudes in other portions of the globe.

Moreover, the prospect of easy access to the sea on the north coast is a great attraction to squatters; so much so, that plans for a city at the mouth of the Albert River have assumed something like a definite shape, and are encouraged, I believe, by the Queensland authorities.

6.—*Extracts of a Despatch from His Excellency* SIR GEORGE BOWEN, F.R.G.S., *to the* DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, F.R.G.S., *in reference to the Voyage of* Captain NORMAN, *and the Routes of* Mr. LANDSBOROUGH *and* Mr. WALKER, *dated* Queensland, March 15, 1862.

I HAVE the happiness to report that Her Majesty's Colonial Steamer *Victoria*, Captain Norman, anchored yesterday in Moreton Bay, on its return from the exploring expedition to the Gulf of Carpentaria.